

Application No: 13/1443C

Location: 22 , Nursery Road, Alsager, Stoke-on-Trent, ST7 2TX

Proposal: PROPOSED EXTENSIONS & ALTERATIONS TOGETHER WITH THE  
ERECTION OF 2 ANTENNA'S

Applicant: B. STEEN

Expiry Date: 29-May-2013

#### **SUMMARY RECOMMENDATION**

Approve with conditions

#### **MAIN ISSUES**

Principle (Open Countryside)

Design

Amenity

#### **REASON FOR REFERRAL**

The application is being referred to Southern Planning Committee at the request of Councillor Hammond:-

*“should the officer recommendation be for approval then I support the request of Haslington Parish Council that the application be determined by Committee due to the visual intrusion of the proposed extensions, alterations and antennas on adjacent properties, not reflecting the existing pattern and character of the surrounding area and the domination of the original building by the proposed development. This is contrary to Policies BE.1, BE.2 and RES.11 of the Crewe & Nantwich Local Plan 2011. I would also strongly recommend that a site visit would be beneficial for Members of the Committee.”*

#### **DESCRIPTION OF SITE AND CONTEXT**

The application site is located on the northern side of Nursery Road overlooking open countryside to the south. A detached bungalow is currently on the site. There is a bungalow on each side, to the adjacent plots east and west. There is open land to the south. The site is consistent with the immediate surrounding context that is low rise and urban fringe. Trees and traditional wooden electricity posts and cables puncture the skyline.

#### **DETAILS OF PROPOSAL**

An extended dormer style dwelling is proposed with a two storey gable features to front and rear with a much larger footprint and volume. It would be 1.5 metres taller than the existing house and proposes 2.9 and 2 metre gaps to each boundary. Two radio antennas were

originally proposed; one attached to the proposed chimney feature projecting 1 metre above the roofline; the other a free standing amateur radio monopole antenna that would have been 7 metres tall retracted and 12 metres tall extended. The free standing monopole would have been sited 3 metres from the rear north east corner of the proposed house. *The free standing antenna has now been omitted from the proposals by revised drawings in response to concerns.*

## **PLANNING HISTORY**

None

## **POLICIES**

### **National Planning Policy**

National Planning Policy Framework

### **Local Plan Policy**

BE.1 (Amenity)

BE.2 (Design Standards)

RES.11 (Improvements and alterations to existing dwellings)

NE.2 (Open Countryside)

### **Other Material Considerations**

Extensions and Householder Development SPD

## **CONSULTATIONS (External to Planning)**

None

## **VIEWS OF HASLINGTON PARISH COUNCIL**

Haslington Parish Council has objected, and supports the call in of the application to be decided by the planning committee.

Contrary to policy BE.1 Amenity - visual intrusion for adjacent properties and “in any other way” risk of aerial tower falling, wind noise through the mast supports etc.

Contrary to policy BE.2 the proposals do not respect the existing pattern and character - Nursery Road is in open countryside with small single storey bungalows - the proposal is for higher dwelling with 1st floor accommodation.

Contrary to policy RES.11 the original building is dominated by the proposed development in an area of open countryside. The proposed development has a ground floor area more than 100% larger than the existing building, plus new 1st floor accommodation.

Uncertainty over the treatment of the two large aerial masts, which do not appear to be covered by a specific C&N BC policy hence our request for this to be considered by committee. Having become aware of an earlier application involving radio antenna in Alsager, the adjacent community where slightly different policies apply from Congleton BC, but still within Cheshire East and very close to the proposed development, also by the same applicant.

09/4148C - The application is refused on the following grounds:-

*“The proposed radio aerial, by reason of its size, siting and design would form a visually intrusive feature, which would detract from the character and appearance of the area within which it is located. The approval of the development would therefore be contrary to national and local policies. To allow the development would be contrary to policy E19 of the adopted Congleton Borough Local Plan First Review 2005.*

*2. Insufficient information has been submitted with the application relating to radiation emission in order to assess adequately the impact of the proposed development having regard to public health. In the absence of this information, it has not been possible to demonstrate that the proposal would comply with Development Plan policies, namely Policy GR7 of the adopted Congleton Borough Local Plan First Review 2005 and other material considerations.*

*3. Insufficient information has been submitted with the application relating to possible noise generation in order to assess adequately the impact of the proposed development having regard to residential amenity. In the absence of this information, it has not been possible to demonstrate that the proposal would comply with Development Plan policies, namely Policies GR6 and GR7 of the adopted Congleton Borough Local Plan First Review 2005 and other material considerations.”*

The decision was taken to appeal by the applicant and was again refused on point 1, i.e. contrary to policy E19.

## **OTHER REPRESENTATIONS**

26 objections have been received to the application and raise the following:-

- Both Antennas would be totally out of character particularly as one would be free standing and 12 metres above the roofline.
- Noise pollution from buzzing from the antenna and wind noise.
- Antenna would be out of keeping with open countryside.
- Antenna would be a visual intrusion and an alien feature.
- Antennas are a health hazard and would affect TV and radio reception.
- Adjacent neighbours particularly object also to the height of the proposed house in comparison to the existing bungalow.
- Juliet balcony would be an invasion of privacy overlooking neighbouring garden.
- Bedroom window in side elevation would overlook neighbouring house.

This is a brief summary and the full contents of these representations are available to view on the Councils website.

## **SUPPORTING INFORMATION**

None

## **OFFICER APPRAISAL**

### **Principle of Development**

The overall principle of development is considered to be acceptable as it is within the spirit of the relevant policies of the Local Plan. Those policies are BE 1 (Amenity); BE.2 (Design Standards); NE.2 (Open Countryside); and RES.11 (Improvements and alterations to existing dwellings).

When assessed against RES 11 the development should respect the setting, design, scale and form and materials of the original dwelling but with the original dwelling remaining the dominant element with the extension subordinate. It is the view that this proposal respects the setting and form but it is clear that the proposal is not subordinate. However, on site the extensions fit well in terms of spacing and it is considered to be acceptable as it should not result in loss of amenity or a loss of parking space. Although RES 11 is not fully satisfied by the proposals it is considered to be, on balance, acceptable.

The application forms refer to the development as an extension but it could be argued that the development is tantamount to a replacement dwelling. In terms of the replacement dwelling policy, RES.10 does state that the replacement dwelling should not be larger than the dwelling it replaces but also should be appropriate in terms of scale, size, design and materials to the existing building and its setting and to the vernacular character of dwellings in the locality. In this case the proposed dwelling is significantly larger in volume (approximately 520 cubic metres replacing approximately 250 cubic metres). Nevertheless, it is considered that the original character of the area would be preserved and the visual representations show that the proposed dwelling would be an improvement in design terms. Crucially, the Council has recently approved a similar scale of development/extension at another site at 32 Nursery Road (12/1954C) and this is representative of the fluid and changing character in the vicinity.

### **Design**

As a result of the concern about the size of the dwelling a street scene perspective was requested from the agent. It is considered that the character of the area would be respected as the increase in size and height would not be readily perceivable as a result of the juxtaposition of the plot with its neighbours. The existing house under utilises the plot and is weak in design terms. The proposed house would be absorbed into the spacious character by way of reasonable gaps on both sides to the boundary of the plot.

### **Visual Amenity**

Clearly the objections to the proposals revolved much around the original proposal plan to site two radio antennae on the site; one on the roof of the proposed house and the other free

standing in the rear garden. It was considered that the free standing proposal would have had the greater impact due to both the retracted and extended height although this was balanced against the backdrop of trees and electricity poles that characterise the area. Nevertheless, the Council was successful in the defending an appeal (APP/R0660/A/10/2124444) against the refusal of 09/4148C, in another location from the same applicant, albeit for a taller 16 metre mast. The Inspector concluded that *“it would be clearly visible from the public highway and it would appear as an incongruous feature within a predominantly residential street scene.”* As a result of discussions with officers the applicant has now omitted the proposed free standing mast from this application. It is considered that the antenna proposed to be attached to the roof would be acceptable in visual terms and would not detract from the overall character of the area.

The extensions and alterations to the dwelling itself are considered to be acceptable in terms of visual amenity and impact on street scene due to the spacious nature of the plot as discussed above.

### **Residential Amenity**

The agent has also amended the drawings to show obscure glazing in a secondary window in the western end elevation as a clear window raised concerns of overlooking to number 24 Nursery Road. However, the applicant wishes to retain the “Juliet” balcony. It is considered that this would be acceptable due to the angle of the balcony looking further to the north away from the neighbouring house. The position of the dwelling projects slightly forward of the building line of the neighbouring houses, and the plot is presently under utilised, thus the bulk should not be overbearing or lead to any significant loss of light.

### **Other issues**

In terms of the noise and public health issues raised in original objections to the two antennas it is clear there is no evidential basis for sustaining reasons for refusal on either basis. The Inspector rejected both reasons for refusal on noise and health in the previous aforementioned appeal case through the lack of compelling evidence therefore they are not considered to be issues that should be used to assess this application. Also, local concerns should now be considerably allayed as the larger free standing antenna is no longer proposed.

### **CONCLUSIONS**

It is considered that the application proposes an acceptable form of extension/ replacement development in an area of gradual change. In this context, it is unlikely to significantly impact upon the open countryside and or impact on neighbouring residential and visual amenity. Notwithstanding criterion of RES.11, it is considered that the proposal is in general accordance with the relevant policies of the Development Plan and is therefore it is recommended that Committee approve the application.

### **RECOMMENDATION**

**APPROVE** subject to the following conditions

#### **1. Standard time period**

- 2. In accordance with Approved Plans**
- 3. Details of materials to be agreed**

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